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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 41st MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. ELARABY	(Egypt)
later:	Mr. SUH (Vice-Chairman)	(Republic of Korea)
later:	Mr. ELARABY (Chairman)	(Egypt)

CONTENTS

- Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session [63]
- Programme of work
- General exchange of views

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 63 (continued)

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION (A/47/887 and Add.1 and 2, A/47/902; A/C.1/47/14)

The CHAIRMAN: Let me extend a warm welcome to all of you as we reconvene the meetings of the First Committee, pursuant to decision 47/422.

As members are aware, in the course of the Committee's regular session, the consideration of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.1/47/7), "New dimensions of arms regulations and disarmament in the post-cold-war era", presented on 27 October 1992 on the occasion of the observance of Disarmament Week, provided us with the opportunity to address a number of crucial issues regarding the role of the United Nations and its various organs in the field of disarmament and arms control and their interrelationship, functions, agenda and priorities in the context of the rapidly changing world order. In view, inter alia, of the relevance of such issues and the limited time-frame we had at our disposal to discuss them at length, it was decided to hold the present resumed session of the First Committee.

As stated in the draft decision, which was adopted without a vote by the General Assembly, the purpose of these meetings will be to reassess the multilateral arms-control and disarmament machinery, in particular, the respective roles of the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament and their interrelationship, as well as the role of the Office of Disarmament Affairs, including ways and means to enhance the functioning and efficiency of this machinery, bearing in mind the competence of the Security Council in these matters. The aim of the session is to conduct the reassessment with a view to reaching concrete, agreed recommendations for appropriate action. With respect to the Conference

(The Chairman)

on Disarmament, it was understood that the primary responsibility for making recommendations on its future rests with that body.

The proposals advanced on 11 November, at the special meeting of the First Committee devoted to the consideration of the report of the Secretary-General, the decision that was finally adopted and the replies received from Member States would seem to indicate that this resumed session will probably be centred mainly on issues related to disarmament machinery. In that context, it is perhaps pertinent to note that in considering such items we shall need to be mindful, first and foremost, of the aim and objective of our endeavours. Accordingly, our efforts to consider all questions related to disarmament machinery and the need to adapt it, as necessary, to meet new challenges of the post-cold-war era must be geared to the ultimate goal that we wish to attain. It is in this spirit of a balanced approach to the issues before us that we shall need to address the challenges and opportunities that have opened up in terms of arms control, disarmament and international security through the integration, globalization and revitalization of the work of the United Nations in the above-mentioned areas, taking into account the enhanced role of the Security Council.

In the present international situation, the world has become increasingly dependent on the United Nations for the solution of social, economic and political conflicts. The Organization has been called upon to play a much more active role in the maintenance of peace and international security, which means an increased responsibility in the field of arms control and disarmament. As the Secretary-General mentioned when presenting his report to this Committee,

(The Chairman)

"Disarmament is an inherent part of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building." (A/C.1/47/PV.18, p. 12)

The issues confronting the United Nations in terms of arms control and disarmament, while not entirely new, certainly need to be dealt with from a perspective that is different from the one that prevailed during the cold-war era. The consideration of the adequacy of the machinery the international community has at its disposal to deal with these issues is undoubtedly a crucial aspect of a much-needed new approach.

(The Chairman)

The views expressed by Member States pursuant to paragraph (b) of decision 47/422, as well as the documents transmitted by the Conference on Disarmament pursuant to paragraph (c) of that decision, indicate that there seems to be a general consensus among Member States about the adequacy and distinctive functions of the current disarmament machinery in its various areas. However, there is also an obvious desire to address the possibility of greater coordination among the various elements of that machinery, to assess their respective ongoing processes of rationalization and finally to consider alternatives to strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, arms control and international security.

One of the points that has been repeatedly underlined is the question of better modalities for coordination among the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission. In that connection it may be relevant to note that paragraph (d) of decision 47/422 requested the Chairman of the First Committee, with the assistance of the other officers of the Committee and the Secretariat, to coordinate the actions referred to in the preceding paragraphs.

In order to take full advantage of the opportunity we have to discuss these crucial matters and to make the most of the time allocated to us, let me suggest that in our deliberations we keep in mind the fundamental objective of disarmament, which is to lay the foundations of a long-lasting peace based on increased trust among nations. In order to ensure that our efforts come to fruition, we need to exercise some restraint in laying down the parameters of our discussion and to remain focused on concrete issues so as to be able to come up with well-defined, agreed and practical proposals that can be meaningfully implemented as expeditiously as possible.

(The Chairman)

Let me express my hope that the present session will make a significant contribution to the future work of the First Committee and to that of other relevant forums dealing with disarmament, arms control and international peace and security.

This morning we were to have heard a statement by the Secretary-General. I was informed this morning that the statement will be delivered tomorrow morning.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Following those opening remarks, let us now turn to the next stage of our work, namely the Committee's programme of work and timetable for this session. In that connection, members will recall that in the course of the past several weeks the Chairman has undertaken extensive informal consultations in New York and in Geneva, with the assistance of the Secretary of the First Committee, Mr. Sohrab Kheradi.

As far as the programme of work is concerned, we should bear in mind first and foremost that the Committee will have at its disposal a relatively short period of time to accomplish the tasks at hand. Indeed, we will have no more than five working days - that is a total of 10 meetings - to accomplish our work, which is related to a wide range of issues that will need to be addressed. In view of this time constraint, I would like first of all to propose that the Committee devote only two meetings - this morning and this afternoon - to a brief general exchange of views on the issues before it. Tomorrow morning the Committee will convene to hear the statement of the Secretary-General, following which it will go into informal meeting.

(The Chairman)

Since we have a long list of speakers for today's two meetings, and in order to accommodate all the delegations already on the list, I suggest that, with the concurrence of the Committee, the list of speakers be declared closed and that a time-limit of 10 minutes for each statement be set.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee agrees to the procedures I have just outlined.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I would suggest that following the general exchange of views the Committee move on to the next stage of its work, namely consideration of its conclusions and recommendations, which could later be reflected, as necessary, in a draft resolution or draft decision for consideration and action by the Committee. I propose that we devote Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, a total of six meetings, to that purpose.

Furthermore, I would like to suggest that the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions or draft decisions be set for Wednesday, 10 March 1993, at 12 noon. I am fully cognizant of the fact that this appears to be an early deadline. However, in view of the short time frame to which I have already referred, it seems that the Committee has very little flexibility in that respect. In this context, we also need to be mindful of the requirement to set aside sufficient time for delegations to carry out consultations among themselves and, if need be, to seek necessary instructions from their authorities, as well as for the Secretariat to prepare programme budget implications, if required.

Finally, on Friday, 12 March 1993, the First Committee will proceed to consider and take action upon any draft resolution or draft decision that may be placed before it.

(The Chairman)

I believe that the programme of work and timetable I have just outlined, which is based on the results of broad and extensive consultations, will meet the Committee's needs and will enable it to carry out the task entrusted to it in the allotted time.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee agrees to the suggested programme of work and timetable.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to draw attention to one other matter. It would greatly facilitate our work as we proceed to the next phase if we were able to conduct our informal deliberations in some kind of structured framework. Accordingly, I would greatly appreciate it if delegations wishing to do so were to submit their suggestions, ideas or proposals to the Secretariat in writing at their earliest convenience. That will enable the Chairman to attempt to consolidate the proposals in a non-paper which would then be distributed, as necessary, in due course.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

The CHAIRMAN: I have great pleasure in calling first on Mr. Radoslav Deyanov, President of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. DEYANOV (Bulgaria), President of the Conference on Disarmament: I am honoured to be starting the discussion today in the First Committee, which has resumed its session with the task of reassessing the multilateral arms control and disarmament machinery with a view to reaching concrete, agreed recommendations on appropriate action to enhance its functioning and efficiency.

We look forward to hearing the important statement the Secretary-General will make before this Committee tomorrow.

(Mr. Deyanov, President, Conference on Disarmament)

I am glad to welcome here today the Director of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Prvoslav Davinic, and the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, Mr. Vicente Berasategui.

I am speaking today in my capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament, to introduce the reports adopted by the Conference in connection with the request contained in paragraph (c) of General Assembly decision 47/422.

(Mr. Deyanov, President, Conference on Disarmament)

By that paragraph the General Assembly requested the Conference on Disarmament to transmit to the Chairman of the First Committee the results of its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations entitled "New Dimensions of Arms Regulation and Disarmament in the Post-Cold-War Era" by 15 February 1993, as well as the status of its ongoing review of its agenda, composition and methods of work by 20 February 1993. In response to that request, the Conference on Disarmament adopted two reports at its 643rd plenary meeting, held on 18 February 1993. Both reports were transmitted by me to you, Sir, as Chairman of the First Committee of the General Assembly, by a letter dated 25 February 1993. The reports annexed to the letter of transmittal have been distributed as an official document of the First Committee under the symbol A/C.1/47/14.

The first report, originally issued as document CD/1183, is contained in annex I of document A/C.1/47/14. It deals with the consideration of the Secretary-General's "New Dimensions" report. In that connection, I wish to underline that, as noted in its paragraph 2, the report expresses the collective consideration by the Conference on Disarmament of the issues within its competence addressed in the Secretary-General's report. While a large number of members of the Conference also stated their national views on the report of the Secretary-General, the report that I am introducing reflects the common view of the members of the Conference on the important matters discussed in the report of the Secretary-General. I wish to note this fact, as the report has been adopted by consensus, following the relevant rules of procedure of the Conference on Disarmament.

I wish also to underline that, as noted in paragraph 1 of the report, the Conference expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his timely

(Mr. Deyanov, President,
Conference on Disarmament)

and useful report, which offered an opportunity to ponder important issues of the present international reality.

The second report, originally issued as CD/1184, is contained in annex II of document A/C.1/47/14. It deals with the status of the Conference's ongoing review of its agenda, composition and methods of work. As indicated in paragraph (a) of decision 47/422, it is understood that the primary responsibility for making recommendations on its future rests with the Conference on Disarmament.

Again, let me emphasize that the second report contains the collective views of the Conference on Disarmament on the review of its agenda, composition and methods of work, with which it has been actively involved since it itself decided, at the end of its 1992 session, to review those questions.

Since the beginning of its 1993 session the Conference has been able quickly to agree on its organization of work and has proceeded, on that basis, to consider both organizational and substantive questions relating to its work.

The Chairman of the open-ended consultations on improved and effective functioning of the Conference, Ambassador Ahmad Kamal of Pakistan, has already started the consideration of that important subject, as have the two Special Coordinators - Ambassador Paul O'Sullivan of Australia and Ambassador Miguel Martin Bosch of Mexico, charged with the responsibility of conducting consultations on the issues of membership and agenda, respectively.

These questions will continue to be addressed, as noted in the report, as important and urgent matters, and the Conference will report to the General Assembly on the results of its deliberations on its membership, agenda and methods of work at the end of the 1993 session.

(Mr. Deyanov, President,
Conference on Disarmament)

I shall confine my introduction of the two reports of the Conference on Disarmament to these few words, leaving it to the delegations to the First Committee to examine in more detail the reports' substantive parts contained in document A/C.1/47/14.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Denmark, Ambassador Knut Eliasen, who will speak on behalf of the European Economic Community and its member States.

Mr. ELIASEN (Denmark): May I first say, Sir, that we are happy to see you chairing the resumed session of the First Committee. We are confident that under your able guidance, of which we had ample proof last year, this session will be put on the right track to accomplish its task.

The European Community and its member States reiterate their thanks to the Secretary-General for his report "New Dimensions of Arms Regulation and Disarmament in the Post-Cold War Era", which has initiated an urgently needed discussion on the future role of arms control and disarmament and how it can be implemented, with the assistance of the United Nations.

The purpose of reconvening the First Committee is to take this discussion further and to reach concrete, agreed recommendations for appropriate action to enhance the functioning and efficiency of the multilateral arms control and disarmament machinery.

In their statement in the First Committee on 11 November 1992, and in their reply of 29 January 1993 to the Secretary-General's report, the European Community and its member States have provided their views on the report and put forward a number of suggestions as to how to rationalize and revitalize the existing arms control and disarmament machinery.

(Mr. Eliasen, Denmark)

In this connection, the European Community and its member States fully support the view of the Security Council - as outlined in the statement by the President of the Council on behalf of its members on 31 January 1992 - that all member States should fulfil their obligations in relation to arms control and disarmament, prevent the proliferation in all its aspects of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, avoid excessive and destabilizing accumulations and transfers of arms, and resolve peacefully, in accordance with the Charter, any problems concerning these matters threatening or disrupting the maintenance of regional and global stability.

The multilateral approach to arms control and disarmament has become more important. This implies that the international community should make the fullest use of the instruments at its disposal. Collective security is closely linked to the strengthening of the authority of the United Nations, and the Organization should therefore undertake appropriate tasks in the field of arms control and disarmament, for example: to encourage and facilitate discussion of ways and means of achieving consensus in the international community with regard to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation; to support the development of general guidelines and basic principles in the field of arms control and disarmament; to support the implementation of existing disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation agreements and the negotiation of new international instruments in this field; and to monitor compliance with arms control and disarmament treaties as well as consider sanctions in cases of violation thereof.

(Mr. Eliasen, Denmark)

The arms control and disarmament machinery should be able to cope with the new realities and priorities of changing times, and to address arms control and disarmament problems in a prompt, efficient and flexible way. These requirements have a bearing on the structure of the future machinery and the relationship between its individual components, its functions, methods of work and working agendas.

Ways and means of fulfilling these requirements could, in our view, be: to strengthen the role of the Security Council, inter alia in the field of arms control and disarmament; to rationalize considerably the work of the First Committee; as far as the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) is concerned, to aim at reaching consensus on concrete guidelines or principles likely to be applied universally with a view to enhancing arms control and disarmament and thus international security, and to establish closer links between work to be carried out by the UNDC, expert groups set up by the Secretary-General and the Conference on Disarmament, respectively, in order to avoid duplication; to recommend to the Conference on Disarmament, the unique global negotiating party on disarmament issues, a realistic enlargement of its membership and an adaptation of its agenda to reflect current realities and concerns of the international community, while maintaining the rule of consensus; and to ensure that adequate resources are provided to enable the Office of Disarmament Affairs to fulfil the important tasks assigned to it by Member States.

All this is but an outline of possibilities. The European Community and its member States invite the Committee to engage in a substantive discussion. In this connection, they would like to refer to the more detailed proposals contained in their reply of 29 January 1993 to the Secretary-General's report

(Mr. Eliasen, Denmark)

"New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" (A/C.1/47/7), and to the separate working paper containing their views as to ways and means of revitalizing and rationalizing the work of the First Committee, copies of which have been distributed to representatives.

The European Community and its member States sincerely hope that this week's discussions will bring about decisions, in particular on the rationalization of the work of the First Committee, and that they will be implemented this year. We consider this exercise as a first step in a continual process, indispensable if we are to cope with the new realities and priorities and to address arms control and disarmament problems in a prompt, efficient and flexible way, thus ensuring progress in real disarmament and arms control and the strengthening of international peace and security.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (Australia): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your practically focused introduction to this resumed session and for your suggestions for the efficient use of our time this week. I will abide by your injunction to keep my remarks short.

Australia unambiguously supports the reform processes set in train by the Secretary-General. Reform of the United Nations system and its internal administration is needed in order to produce more rational, effective and revitalized mechanisms suited to the demands of our times. This includes a re-examination and a strengthening of the disarmament machinery.

Therefore we are pleased to support this resumed session of the First Committee to consider how to make the existing disarmament machinery operate better and whether new or different elements are needed.

At one level, the current machinery has a certain logic: the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) to deliberate, the First Committee to

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

set forth the declarations of the international community and the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate legally binding instruments.

In practice, quite a degree of overlap has developed, partly because of the stasis imposed by the constraints of the cold war. However, as last year's reform of the UNDC agenda, rationalization of the First Committee proceedings, and the Conference on Disarmament's successful conclusion of the Convention on Chemical Weapons illustrate, we now have new opportunities for making the disarmament machinery work effectively.

While we think the Disarmamemt Commission has a valuable function, the reform of its agenda should continue. It should organize itself so that one item is reported out and one new item added each year; there should be an agreed "shelf-life" of items; and there should be a connection between agenda items in the UNDC and other disarmament forums. In saying there should be a connection, we do not wish to argue for a direct transference between items on the UNDC agenda to other forums. But equally it is clear that some disarmament and arms control issues need time for reflection, clarification and maturation before they are ready for elaboration into treaties or other format: the UNDC provides such a forum for deliberation. A closer link between the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and UNDC would be appropriate.

Australia is open-minded about rationalizing and recasting the United Nations General Assembly committee system. But we would not want the First Committee to have its focus on security, arms control and disarmament diluted to a point where its essential function for declaring the views of Member States on primary security interests was vitiated.

The First Committee has been enhanced by the addition of the international security items. The agenda of the First Committee could be

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

reconsidered in the light of these changes to the General Assembly committee system. We expect there are ways to regroup the global arms-control issues: for example, its institutional reports could be considered together, as could space items, nuclear resolutions, general principles such as verification, international security, confidence-building guidelines and so on. The First Committee could be made more focused by adopting an agreed thematic approach each year, by merging overlapping resolutions - particularly on regional disarmament - by more biennialization of resolutions that come up with great frequency and by shortening the time allotted to the First Committee by one week.

Australia fully supports the independent negotiating role of the Conference on Disarmament. The Conference's autonomy, its consensus approach and limited membership are the elements that permit it to function as a negotiating body. We would therefore oppose any proposals to change the Conference on Disarmament's fundamental character. We support the consensus submissions made by the Conference in response to the Secretary-General's report, "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" (A/C.1/47/7), the report of which has just been introduced by the President of the Conference on Disarmament. As well, Australia has submitted directly to the Secretary-General its views on that report.

One particular matter of interest to us is the consideration of membership of the Conference on Disarmament, since I have the honour to be the Conference's Special Coordinator for the issue of its membership. It is a sign of the times that many countries are pressing actively and with impatience for the Conference on Disarmament membership to be expanded. I

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

believe that the Conference as a body is willing to move expeditiously - certainly during its 1993 session - to address this question in ways that preserve its character but also make it a more contemporary and therefore more useful body.

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

Australia is aware of debate about the location of the United Nations disarmament machinery. We are not committed, for or against any particular proposals; we favour strengthening the Office of Disarmament Affairs, making it more capable of delivering effective outcomes and making it as accessible to Member States as possible, because we see a close relationship between the security role of the United Nations and its arms control and disarmament functions. Whatever arrangements are made for the location of the disarmament machinery, there needs to be productive interaction between those functions. We welcome the Secretary-General's statement and pledge to give the matter careful consideration. We also appreciate the fact that no final decision has been taken, as we believe in the importance of consultation with members on such an important issue.

To conclude, we see useful work for this resumed session and look forward to participating actively in it.

Mr. FOUATHIA (Algeria) (interpretation from French): In its reply to the Secretary-General's note verbale in connection with his report entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era", the Algerian Government commented on the current multilateral disarmament machinery. I wish to take the opportunity afforded by the First Committee's resumption of its work to share some of my delegation's views on that subject.

In seeking to reevaluate the multilateral disarmament machinery, we cannot but refer to that decisive milestone, the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, whose Final Document entrusted certain specific tasks to bodies created for that purpose. Owing to the cold

(Mr. Fouathia, Algeria)

war, those tasks were not completed by the multilateral machinery, and they must be re-examined in the current context of the new international climate, which holds great promise for the multilateral disarmament process.

We are full of hope that the new post-cold-war political situation will open the way to genuine multilateral disarmament negotiations, particularly in areas already identified and given high priority by the international community.

Within its mandate, the existing multilateral disarmament machinery has played and can continue to play a role so long as all the positions taken in disarmament negotiations have political will as their basis. Each of the United Nations bodies created since 1978 has a clearly defined role in the disarmament arena, a role that meshes with and complements the roles of the other bodies. My delegation considers that any attempt to overhaul the system must be accompanied by a concern for rationality and effectiveness and must take account of the precedents in the field of disarmament. We cannot use insufficiently considered ideas as the basis for changing a framework that yielded only the results that it was wished it would yield.

My delegation therefore continues to believe that owing to a lack of political will the multilateral disarmament machinery in its present form has not yet revealed all its possibilities. But we are inclined to favour any initiative that would lift all threats to the future of disarmament activities in the United Nations. It is from that perspective that the Algerian delegation wishes to make a few observations concerning the multilateral disarmament machinery vis-à-vis the proposals set out in the report of the Secretary-General which is before the Committee.

(Mr. Fouathia, Algeria)

I would stress that the present machinery was designed to carry out a specific programme endorsed by the entire international community in circumstances far less favourable than those of today and set out in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978. Any change in the present multilateral disarmament machinery, to rationalize it and set up a coordinated system, must be viewed in the light of the orientation of that programme, whose priority matters have unfortunately not yet been adequately tackled.

In the field of disarmament more than in any other area, the tasks of the two main United Nations organs, the General Assembly and the Security Council, can be assessed only in the light of Article 11 of the Charter.

With respect to the First Committee, my delegation considers that this Main Committee must remain a forum for the consideration and adoption of decisions on matters whose priority has already been established by the international community. Its agenda should continue to focus mainly on specific items relating to disarmament and security, including any new concern of the international community in those areas. As in the past, rationalizing its methods of work could take place as a continuous, gradual process of adaptation to changing requirements and circumstances.

With respect to the Disarmament Commission, a deliberative body dealing with specific items, it could well continue its activities that complement those of other bodies, including the First Committee. But it should be encouraged to add, if possible, to the reforms introduced in 1990 by adopting an even briefer agenda of more practical matters, to facilitate the adoption

(Mr. Fouathia, Algeria)

of disarmament measures in other bodies, on the understanding that there should be consultations on the rationalization of the Commission, like those envisaged for the First Committee.

With respect to the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating forum in the field of disarmament, we think it proper that the Conference be free through consultations to decide on questions relating to its agenda, its composition and its working methods. As to its agenda, we are heartened by an increased movement towards consideration of the concerns of all delegations, as expressed during the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In our view, enlargement of the membership of the Conference should reflect better regional balance, which will guarantee better representation of the entire international community, but without sacrificing the effectiveness of that body.

Moreover, it is to be feared that giving the Geneva forum new responsibilities beyond its original mandate could alter its principal mandate and hamper its effectiveness at the very time when there is a certain impetus following the recent conclusion of the chemical-weapons Convention and a greater inclination to work towards negotiations on matters of interest to the entire international community.

With respect to the Office of Disarmament Affairs, we anticipate that carrying out the Secretary-General's proposals will revitalize the Office, inter alia through reevaluating the work it carries out in New York and, above all, by providing it with resources commensurate with its aspirations.

I wish in conclusion to assure you, Sir, of my delegation's full cooperation in striving for success in our current work.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Once again we congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on the way you have been directing the work of the First Committee. We are sure that our work will have a successful outcome, which is augured by your enthusiasm, together with your knowledge of disarmament and international security matters and the functioning of this Organization, and is confirmed by the expeditious manner in which our work this morning is organized.

On 9 December last the General Assembly decided to resume the meetings of the First Committee with the aim of reassessing the multilateral disarmament machinery, in particular the respective functions of the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament and their interrrelationship, as well as the functioning of the Office of Disarmament Affairs, including ways and means to enhance the functioning and effectiveness of the machinery. That decision (47/422) had its origins in the meeting of the First Committee, held at the behest of the non-aligned countries, on 11 November to consider the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.1/47/7), entitled "New dimensions of arms regulations and disarmament in the post-cold-war era". On that occasion we mentioned the possibility of holding

> "a brief resumed session of the First Committee in February or March". (A/C.1/47/PV. 29, p. 20)

We added that

> "'Brief' should be understood to mean about five days. The purpose of the session would be to examine the functions and interrelationship of the various disarmament forums as well as proposals to change the structure of the Secretariat in this area. There should be an open and detailed exchange of opinions in order to achieve agreement on what we

(Mr. Marín Bosch, Mexico)

expect of the various forums and of the Secretariat in the field of disarmament. For this, it will be necessary to know in detatil the opinions and intentions of countries and the Secretariat itself."

(ibid. p. 21)

We were very pleased to learn, a few moments ago, that tomorrow morning we shall have the honour of hearing the Secretary-General speak in this regard.

That decision of the General Assembly has already had the desired effect, as it has given us a brief pause, a sort of parenthesis for individual and collective reflection, which has served to clarify certain proposals and to sharpen our ideas on these questions. Several Member States have given their opinions on the above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General. The opinions of the Government of Mexico appear, along with others, in document A/47/887.

In response also to decision 47/422, the Conference on Disarmament has submitted to the First Committee two reports, one on the report of the Secretary-General and the other on the ongoing review of its agenda, composition and methods of work. It should be pointed out that the timely drafting of those reports of the Conference on Disarmament was made possible thanks, in large part, to the savoir faire of its Chairman in January and February, Ambassador Amorim of Brazil.

In your capacity as Chairman of this Committee, Sir, you have carried out consultations on these questions, including a round with the members of the Conference on Disarmament, which we greatly appreciate. You have suggested that after this brief exchange of views informal consultations should be held, open to all States, with the aim of reaching agreeement on a series of recommendations relating to United Nations machinery in the field of disarmament. This course of action seems appropriate to us and will help us to carry out the work of the First Committee in this brief resumed session.

(Mr. Marín Bosch, Mexico)

It should be emphasized that the point of departure for United Nations disarmament machinery is the Final Document of the special session on disarmament held by the General Assembly in 1978. That document was approved by all the States Members of the United Nations, and any change to its contents should enjoy equally broad support. Short of convening another special session of the General Assembly, the First Committee will have to examine thoroughly these and other questions relating to United Nations machinery in disarmament matters.

I should now like to present my Government's views on these matters.

As agreed in 1978, we consider that

> "The First Committee of the General Assembly should deal in the future only with questions of disarmament and related international security questions." (S-10/2, para. 117)

In recent years the First Committee has been rationalizing its work, and it should continue to do so, with the aim of focusing its debates even more on disarmament items. At present the General Assembly is considering the possibility of reducing the number of its Main Committees. Any reallocation of agenda items should avoid assigning to the First Committee questions unrelated to disarmament and international security.

Made up of all the States Members of the United Nations, the United Nations Disarmament Commission is, as agreed in 1978, a subsidiary deliberative organ of the General Assembly. Its function is to consider and make recommendations on the various problems in the sphere of disarmament and follow up the relevant decisions of the special session on disarmament. It provides an annual report to the General Assembly and in recent years it has introduced a number of changes in its working methods.

(Mr. Marín Bosch, Mexico)

On the other hand, some countries have expressed doubts about the advisability of maintaining a forum such as the Disarmament Commission. My delegation shares some of those doubts, but it considers it highly appropriate that the States Members of the United Nations continue to have a disarmament forum in which all can participate on an equal footing. Hence we should like to suggest that the possibility be explored - I repeat, that the possibility be explored - of the First Committee's establishing a subcommittee, open to all States Members of the Organization, that would meet for a period of three or four weeks in New York at the same time as the Disarmament Commission is meeting. That working group, or subcommittee, would be charged with a dual task: first, to consider, and make recommedations on, certain disarmament items that would be identified by the First Committee during its autumn session, and, secondly, to consider proposals aimed at the further rationalization of the work of the First Committee itself. This proposal has the advantage of preserving a forum that is similar to the Disarmament Commission while at the same time achieving greater coordination with the First Committee.

Established by the General Assembly in 1978 the Conference on Disarmament is the only multilateral forum for negotiation on disarmament. Its membership is restricted, and its decisions are made by consensus. Its membership was agreed in 1978, and it has recently stepped up the process of reviewing its agenda, membership and working methods, as described in document CD/WP.442. The Geneva Conference on Disarmament enjoys a unique status in the United Nations system, and it should maintain that status and continue its functions in Geneva with the provision of needed services by the Office of Disarmament Affairs. A year ago a new Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament

(Mr. Marín Bosch, Mexico)

was appointed; he is also Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The post of Assistant Secretary-General is still vacant, and we hope that it will be filled soon.

(Mr. Marín Bosch, Mexico)

After 1978, the United Nations Centre for Disarmament was strengthened and its research and information functions extended. It was transformed into the Department for Disarmament Affairs, headed by an Under-Secretary-General. A year ago it was again downgraded, this time to an Office. During this resumed session of the First Committee, it will be necessary to review the role and resources of the Office of Disarmament Affairs in order to enable the United Nations to continue to fulfil the role we have assigned to it in the field of disarmament. Careful consideration will have to be given to the suggestion that the Office transfer the bulk of its operations from United Nations headquarters here in New York to Geneva. This should be examined in the light of the new functions that Member States decide to assign to the Office of Disarmament Affairs in order to enhance the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and ensure a more effective functioning of its disarmament machinery.

Those are our brief observations. We offer you, Sir, the full cooperation of the delegation of Mexico in the search for agreements on these questions, which enjoy wide support among the States Members of the Organization.

Mr. DE ARAUJO CASTRO (Brazil), Chairman, United Nations Disarmament Commission: I welcome the opportunity to contribute to this exchange of views as Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC).

In accordance with General Assembly decision 47/422, the purpose of this collective exercise is to reassess the multilateral arms control and disarmament machinery, in particular the respective roles of the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament and their interrelationship, as well as the role of the Office of

(Mr. de Araujo Castro, Chairman, Disarmament Commission)

Disarmament Affairs. In this process, we are to consider "ways and means to enhance the functioning and efficiency" of this machinery. It is to this point as it relates to the Commission that I wish to direct my remarks.

Over the last few years, the Commission has already been engaged in a carefully considered process of review and reform, with a view to enhancing its functioning and efficiency. This ongoing process has so far achieved a considerable measure of success, and I believe that it should be encouraged to proceed.

It may be recalled that the United Nations Disarmament Commission was established in 1978 by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament as a successor to the Commission originally created by the General Assembly in 1952. Open to the participation of all Member States of the United Nations, the Commission functions as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly. It is from the General Assembly and its First Committee that the Commission receives guidance, and it is to them that the Commission reports annually. The UNDC has a clearly defined role as

> "the specialized, deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery that allows for in-depth deliberations on specific disarmament issues, leading to the submission of concrete recommendations on those issues" (resolution 44/119 C, para. 3).

The ongoing reform process of the Disarmament Commission is based on the document on "ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission", adopted by the Commission in 1990, in the light of General Assembly resolution 44/119 C.

In 1991 and 1992, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner

(Mr. de Araujo Castro, Chairman, Disarmament Commission)

of Austria and Ambassador André Erdös of Hungary, respectively, the Disarmament Commission proceeded to implement its reform programme.

In accordance with the "ways and means" document, it concentrated its work in 1991 and 1992 on the consideration of four substantive items in four different working groups: objective information on military matters; the process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons; a regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security; and the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields.

Last year, the Commission successfully concluded the consideration of the first of these four items, adopting a set of guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters, the text of which is reproduced in the 1992 report of the Commission. The General Assembly subsequently endorsed these guidelines and recommendations and recommended them to all States for implementation.

In 1991 and 1992, the Commission began and continued its consideration of the three other items on its substantive agenda, those relating to nuclear disarmament, to the regional approach and to science and technology. The progress achieved to date in the deliberations on these three questions is reflected in the reports submitted by the Commission to the General Assembly and is linked to a large extent to the many thoughtful working papers that were submitted by delegations or groups of delegations and distributed as documents of the Commission.

In 1992 the Commission also considered informally the convenience of further refining the reform programme embodied in the 1990 document on ways

(Mr. de Araujo Castro, Chairman, Disarmament Commission)

and means. This fine-tuning of the Commission's reform process came to be reflected later in the year, at the organizational session of the Commission held on 8 December 1992. In accordance with operative paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 47/54 A, the Commission decided to begin moving its agenda in the direction of a three-item phased approach, by which, in principle, at each annual substantive session of the Commission, one substantive item will be in the first year of consideration, one item in its middle year and one item in its third or concluding year. It is expected that this programme can be fully implemented by the 1994 session of the Commission.

As noted in resolution 47/54 A, 1993 will be a transitional year for the Disarmament Commission. The Commission has decided that at its forthcoming substantive session - to be held from 19 April to 10 May 1993 - work should be concluded on two of the items on its substantive agenda, the item on the regional approach to disarmament and the item on science and technology. The Commission has also decided to hold over the item on nuclear disarmament for conclusion in 1994.

I am at present conducting consultations, which I hope will soon be concluded, on the question of whether to begin in 1993 the consideration of a new substantive item. As noted in resolution 47/54 A, support has been expressed in the Commission for the inclusion in its agenda of a new item on the question of non-proliferation.

It should also be recalled that, in preparing for its 1994 session, the Commission will have before it a proposal on the inclusion of an item on matters related to international arms transfers.

It is my expectation that we will be able to achieve significant results this year in each of the two items scheduled for conclusion at the substantive

(Mr. de Araujo Castro, Chairman, Disarmament Commission)

session of UNDC: the regional approach to disarmament and the role of science and technology.

It should be noted that a very useful input to our work in this resumed session of the First Committee is contained in the views expressed by a number of Member States in accordance with decision 47/422 and compiled in the report of the Secretary-General contained in documents A/47/887 and A/47/887/Add.1.

In examining these different replies, in particular as they refer to the Disarmament Commission, certain common or recurring elements can be extracted which are, I believe, relevant to our work here today. Among these, I would mention the references made to the following points:

There is the importance of the Commission as a universal forum that provides all States with the opportunity to participate in deliberations on disarmament and arms-control issues, thus involving and engaging States of all regions in this process of concern for the entire international community.

There is also the distinct mandate of the Commission as a deliberative forum for the focused consideration of issues that cannot be debated in depth during the annual sessions of the First Committee or that have not yet been defined sufficiently to be taken up for negotiation.

Another point is the role of the Commission in promoting conceptual discussion, consensus-building and the identification of global and regional measures for negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament, in regional forums or elsewhere. In this connection, the Commission is said to have an important part to play in encouraging, supporting, supplementing and preparing the groundwork for disarmament negotiations conducted in other forums.*

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* Mr. Suh (Republic of Korea), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Mr. de Araujo Castro, Chairman, Disarmament Commission)

Another point is the general support for the reforms already undertaken by the Commission and for further steps to streamline its agenda and working methods, with reference in particular to the three-item phased approach.

There is also the need for the Disarmament Commission to focus more directly on its working agenda, limited to a few concrete subjects, for detailed discussions without the pressure of voting on resolutions.

Another point is the need for more consultations between the annual sessions of the Commission and for more advance preparation by delegations, with the presentation, as appropriate, of working papers.

Next there is the notion that the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament have distinct but complementary and interrelated roles, and that there is a need for a greater degree of dialogue and coordination, for closer links and for a strengthened relationship between these three bodies.

Finally - a point of relevance to the Disarmament Commission as well as to other components of the United Nations disarmament machinery - there is the need to strengthen the Office for Disarmament Affairs, providing it with adequate staff and other resources, so as to enable it to carry out the important tasks assigned to it by Member States.

As Chairman of the Disarmament Commission, I welcome the holding of these reconvened meetings of the First Committee, under your chairmanship, Sir. The exchange of views in this opening debate and in the consultations to be conducted under your always very able guidance will, I am sure, contribute to our common goal of enhancing the functioning and efficiency of the multilateral arms control and disarmament machinery. I am ready to cooperate fully with you and with all other delegations in this endeavour.

Mr. FOSTERVOLL (Norway): My delegation welcomes this opportunity to address the resumed session of the First Committee under your able guidance, Sir. As you will be aware, Norway has submitted a written contribution outlining our views on the Secretary-General's report "New Dimensions of Arms Regulation and Disarmament in the Post-Cold War era". In this brief statement I want to highlight our position on some of the key issues confronting us.

Having studied carefully the replies provided so far to the Secretary-General's report, and listened to the statements made here this morning, we note that broad agreement seems to exist regarding the need to restructure and revitalize the international framework for negotiations and consultations on disarmament. The task is to adjust the disarmament machinery to new opportunities and challenges.

The emerging international consensus on vital security issues, manifested by a revitalized Security Council, should be fully exploited so as to enable us to make further progress on the international disarmament and arms-control agenda. The following four issues are in our view of particular importance.

First, the danger of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects constitutes a growing challenge to peace and security. Non-proliferation has been on the agenda for decades. The time has now come to renew our efforts to halt the spread of such weapons. Efforts should include a strengthening of the control regarding transfer of technology and sensitive expertise. In this respect, the right of States to have access to technology necessary for their economic and industrial development should be ensured. All States which have not yet done so should accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

(Mr. Fostervoll, Norway)

Secondly, a comprehensive nuclear-test ban remains an issue of theh highest priority. Lack of substantial progress prior to the 1995 Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty will undermine our efforts to bolster the non-proliferation regime. May I add one further important consideration. Nuclear test explosions present grave environmental and health hazards. My country would be deeply concerned if testing were to be resumed at Novaya Zemlya, an archipelago in a vulnerable Arctic environment.

Thirdly, the chemical-weapons Convention represents a decisive step towards the total elimination of these particularly cruel weapons. Universal adherence to the Convention is a central objective. To obtain a truly effective ban on chemical weapons it will be essential to ensure full implementation of its provisions by all its signatories. A well-functioning and effective secretariat in The Hague is of the utmost importance in this regard.

Fourthly, the global responsibility of the United Nations should be supplemented and strengthened by bilateral and regional arrangements. They should include efforts to halt and reverse regional arms races through greater transparency in armaments, non-proliferation regimes and a reduction in arms transfers. Progress and experience in arms-control and confidence-building measures made in one region could be applied to other regions. Regional security arrangements should be encouraged through an exchange of information and experience in a wider international framework.

Inevitably, there is a substantial overlap in the subjects discussed by the three main bodies that make up the multilateral disarmament machinery, although the approach may be different. The future disarmament machinery must

(Mr. Fostervoll, Norway)

be adapted to current economic and political realities. There is clearly scope for improved efficiency and savings of economic resources. We have commented in more detail on these issues in our written contribution. May I on this occasion just make the following brief points.

One possible course of action would be to concentrate resources towards a restructured Conference on Disarmament and a more smoothly functioning First Committee. The First Committee should at the same time be given the opportunity to conduct a broad political discussion as well as to provide input to the Conference on Disarmament.

The Disarmament Commission has had a role to play in encouraging, supporting and supplementing disarmament negotiations conducted in other multilateral, regional and bilateral forums. Despite the promising developments in the Commission's work after the adoption of the reform programme, further improvements in the structure and functioning of the Disarmament Commission are necessary.

The essential fourth part of the machinery is the Office of Disarmament Affairs. We trust that it will be given sufficient resources to allow it to continue to carry out its tasks effectively.

Analyses, studies and research activities should in the future be carried out by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). Norway favours a further strengthening of the Institute, including its financial basis.

The time has come for an enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament. Expanding its membership would broaden the political basis for the negotiations and enable the Conference to benefit from the experience and contributions of a larger group of nations.

(Mr. Fostervoll, Norway)

Norway supports the proposal to accept as members those States which have applied and shown a genuine interest in the work of the Conference. We believe that a decision to enlarge the Conference on Disarmament should be taken without further delay. The outcome of this resumed session of the First Committee should help bring about such a decision.

Since 1986, Norway has been the endorsed candidate of the Western Group to become a full member of the Conference on Disarmament. Our keen interest in the work of the Conference remains undiminished and has been demonstrated throughout the years. We are ready to assume all the responsibilities that full membership entails.

Mr. PONCE (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): Document A/47/887 contains, inter alia, the views of my Government on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era". In this brief statement, I shall therefore deal mainly with institutional questions. But before doing so, I should like to make two preliminary comments.

First, the objectives and plan of action contained in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, of 1978, remain valid, and it is our obligation to continue to make progress along those lines. The deluge of international events that over the last few months have demanded the participation of the United Nations in various areas of the world through massive humanitarian or peace-keeping operations should not lead us into the error of subordinating to the pressing needs of the moment the objectives of arms control and disarmament achieved in laborious negotiations in 1978.

(Mr. Ponce, Ecuador)

Secondly, a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, progress towards a non-discriminatory and universally accepted non-proliferation system, and the strengthening of regional conventional disarmament schemes are tasks that the international community can and should promote immediately. The new reality makes that possible, as can be seen in the flexibility of the negotiations on the Convention on chemical weapons, and we can take these decisive steps. We must make progress before the expansion and growth of conflicts generated in the many latent situations of tension jeopardize the prevailing international climate, which is favourable to arms control and disarmament.

I turn now to disarmament machinery.

The results obtained so far by the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament reflect the political will of Member States. Their institutional structure and their procedures have made it possible for concrete and positive results to be achieved whenever the political will has existed. The successful agreement on the chemical weapons Convention is clear evidence of the effectiveness of the Conference on Disarmament. For its part, the Disarmament Commission has been gaining strength as a valid universal forum for the exchange of ideas and the conciliation of disarmament positions. Not only has the work of the Commission yielded the outlines of consensus that pave the way for the completion of certain items through negotiations in the Conference; in certain cases, it has also made possible the adoption of concrete mechanisms of universal scope, such as the registry of objective information on military matters. For its part, the First Committee of the General Assembly has reflected the positive changes brought about in the climate of international cooperation by the end of the cold war.

(Mr. Ponce, Ecuador)

It is encouraging to note that every year there is a larger number of resolutions adopted by consensus - 60 per cent at the most recent session of the General Assembly - and that most of the resolutions put to the vote are subjected to fewer and fewer objections by Member States.

My Government believes that if Member States renew their political will in the cause of disarmament and make use of the potential offered by the present machinery, the benefits to the international community can be certain and concrete results can be achieved. Making use of the negotiating possibilities offered by an expanded Conference on Disarmament to adopt a convention on a definitive nuclear-test ban, and the building of consensus by the Disarmament Commission, particularly on such priority issues as non-proliferation - which would be an important contribution to the review Conference of the non-proliferation Treaty - are clear instances of the immediate possibilities offered by those forums.

My delegation does not object to the First Committee's incorporating in its agenda new items currently being dealt with by other Committees of the General Assembly if the objective is to regroup the items relating to international security. If we reach such a decision, we shall have to adopt relevant measures so that disarmament issues maintain in our debates the high priority called for by the present situation. In reorganizing the agenda, we shall have to decide whether an annual review of all items is justified, and in preparing resolutions for adoption we should exhaust all efforts to merge drafts on closely related items.

The Office of Disarmament Affairs plays a basic role in the smooth functioning of multilateral disarmament organs. Its technical and administrative support is at the heart of the work of the General Assembly, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament. Its

(Mr. Ponce, Ecuador)

contributions to publicizing the tasks of those organs and in support of specialized-personnel training in our countries deserve our praise. That is why its downgrading and the recently effected reductions in personnel and resources were of concern to my Government. New ideas on a new change in its administrative structure, just a few months after the last one, will be carefully and constructively analyzed by Ecuador. Our Government believes that no decision should be made on this matter until all Member States, based on the technical analyses and assessments of the Secretariat, receive the necessary input on which to base their opinions.

Mr. WHANNOU (Benin) (interpretation from French): Now that the First Committee is resuming its work of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, in keeping with decision 47/422 under item 63 of the Assembly's agenda entitled "Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session" - the first to deal with general and complete disarmament under international control - the delegation of Benin wishes to express its satisfaction, Sir, at your competent and dynamic leadership.

Benin is convinced that, through concerted efforts, we can achieve the aims of the international community to eliminate States' aggressive capacities through disarmament, starting with the elimination of the danger of nuclear war and the application of measures to halt and reverse the arms race and pave the way to a lasting peace. The tenth special session stressed the importance of an international machinery to deal with the problems of disarmament in its various aspects and of operating effectively.

(Mr. Whannou, Benin)

Since then the international community has become increasingly aware that mankind is threatened with self-destruction through the massive stockpiling, improvement and proliferation of weaponry. But it must be stated that the multilateral process has not kept pace with that awareness. Indeed, owing to the persistent cold war, marked by bloc politics and ideological rivalries in a world of clashing interests, Member States had to focus on their own security and that of their allies. But with the end of that period of global rivalry, the world has become more interdependent, which requires collective measures such as disarmament to guarantee the security of all.

While the goals of disarmament are well known, it is none the less necessary to re-evaluate and strengthen arms-control and disarmament machinery. In that connection, the report of the Secretary-General issued during last year's Disarmament Week, "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era", provides a good basis for our deliberations.

In that important report, which in a sense supplements "An Agenda for Peace", submitted to Member States for their consideration, the Secretary-General proposes adopting a comprehensive integrated approach and revitalizing United Nations activities, including the greater role to be played by the Security Council. Disarmament, which should be the concern of all, would be integrated into the overall effort to strengthen international security, and the United Nations would play the central role in the search for consensus, in setting priorities and in advocating the most appropriate machinery. In the Secretary-General's view, what makes it even more vital to explore the new dimensions of disarmament is that the end of bipolarity has failed to reduce the need for disarmament.

(Mr. Whannou, Benin)

The delegation of Benin welcomes the report of the Secretary-General, particularly since it reflects our own conviction that the strengthening of international security should enable each State to live and develop in peace. True disarmament must take account of the multidimensional concerns of international security, the ultimate expression of which is peace, to be ensured, in turn, by the absence not only of military threats but also of non-military threats, such as the problems of ensuring sustainable development: progress in either of those areas has a positive effect on the other.

But we can scarcely make progress without interaction among the multilateral structures that are important for setting guidelines, for deliberation and for negotiation; these structures are, respectively, the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament. We are convinced that the success of disarmament efforts in bringing about the adoption of effective measures depends upon concerted action by those bodies with the guidance of the General Assembly, which, under Article 11 of the Charter, considers "the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments".

Since disarmament must be the result of negotiations, the role of the Security Council, which bears responsibility for the maintenance and the restoration of international peace and security, must fall within the framework of Article 26, which states that

> "In order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, the Security Council shall

(Mr. Whannou, Benin)

be responsible for formulating ... plans to be submitted to the Members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments".

The Conference on Disarmament has shown its capability by agreeing on the elimination of one type of weapons of mass destruction, namely, chemical weapons. But it is important to alter its membership so as to reflect new international realities and especially to take into account the security concerns of the entire, diverse international community. Otherwise, there can be no true disarmament measures. The Conference's agenda should take account of the priorities established at the tenth special session, especially nuclear disarmament in all its aspects, including the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests, non-proliferation, the prevention of nuclear war, security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. Attention must be paid too to the question of verification, which can guarantee the adoption of disarmament measures by States and the effectiveness of those measures.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will expire in 1995; it should be transformed into a genuine instrument for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and for the promotion of nuclear technology for peaceful and developmental purposes.

Successful functioning of the multilateral disarmament machinery also requires the strengthening of the technical functions of the Secretariat, especially at Headquarters in New York. My delegation is grateful to the Office of Disarmament Affairs for its efforts in the cause of disarmament, especially its efforts to gain needed public support and to promote the regional action that is a valuable adjunct to world-wide disarmament. The Office must be made capable of serving us better.

(Mr. Whannou, Benin)

Today the international climate is more favourable than ever to implementing the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session, devoted to general and complete disarmament under effective international control. All that is needed is that we should seize the opportunity and show greater openness in order to reconcile our different viewpoints and stress what unites us in the interest of security for all.

Mr. ACHARYA (Nepal): My delegation welcomes this opportunity for an exchange of views on the effectiveness of United Nations disarmament machinery in the post-cold-war era. I take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General, who has presented important ideas in that regard within the triple concept of integration, globalization and revitalization.

My delegation approaches the issue on the basis of a few fundamental premises: first, the central role of the United Nations in translating global consensus on disarmament and security issues into operative reality; secondly, the continuing validity of the priorities set out in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament; thirdly, the need for disarmament efforts to be predicated on a clear understanding of the relation between disarmament, international security and development; and lastly, acceptance of the linkage between arms regulation and disarmament on the one hand and the removal of the underlying causes of tension and conflicts on the other.

New challenges of the post-cold-war era have underlined the necessity of such an integrated approach. The First Committee, a deliberative body with universal membership, provides an indispensable forum for identifying priorities in disarmament and security issues. It has contributed to rallying

(Mr. Acharya, Nepal)

wider support for and generating momentum towards arms control and disarmament. It is the most appropriate forum for integrating the discussion of new dimensions of disarmament with related concerns of the international community, such as development and the underlying causes of tension and conflicts in many areas of the world today.

We have seen remarkable progress in rationalizing the work of the Committee in the last few years; that process is bound to be continued in the future, along with a focus on streamlining the agenda and providing more time for issue-oriented consultations rather than general debate.

(Mr. Acharya, Nepal)

The process of reform continues in the Disarmament Commission, a process launched by the adoption of the ways and means document in 1990. The institution of a three-item agenda for the Commission, each maturing in a phased manner, is a remarkable achievement. My delegation therefore sees no need to interfere with the ongoing process. Having said that, I wish to underline the fact that the Commission is a deliberative body with a mandate distinct from that of the Conference on Disarmament. The short time available for the substantive session of the Commission could be even better utilized by avoiding duplicative general debate and, instead, by focusing on an in-depth analysis of items on the agenda with a view to evolving a set of guidelines and recommendations.

Nepal places great importance on the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating forum. We sincerely hope that with the landmark achievement in the area of chemical weapons, the Conference on Disarmament will focus on universally recognized priority items such as a comprehensive test ban and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. My delegation is not convinced that the Conference should take up the additional burden as a permanent review and supervisory body for disarmament agreements. As a non-member, Nepal finds the present composition of the Conference on Disarmament fairly representative. It is, however, a question to be decided by the Conference itself.

The Office of Disarmament Affairs has been facing an expanding number of tasks. The establishment of the Register of Conventional Arms and of a data-based system in the Office of Disarmament Affairs alone place a very heavy burden on the already threadbare Secretariat support; the Office is also expected to play a major role in the inter-departmental task force to give advice on the political, economic and technical aspects of conversion. The

(Mr. Acharya, Nepal)

Office of Disarmament Affairs also has a major role to play in integrating the efforts towards confidence and security-building measures through the United Nations regional centres. The changing nature of international relations calls for closer coordination between the Office of Disarmament Affairs, the Security Council and even the Department of Peace-keeping Operations.

With this in mind, my delegation strongly supports strengthening the Office of Disarmament Affairs to enable it to perform the functions expected of it in a rapidly changing situation. We strongly support maintaining the integrity of the Office and are opposed to moving the entire Office or its units away from New York.

The United Nations Charter defines the role of the Security Council in the regulation of armaments and disarmament. The epochal changes in international relations demand that these provisions be activated. Democratization of the Security Council will enhance its role and credibility in matters of arms control and disarmament. The Council could also benefit from a system of coordination with the Conference on Disarmament.

Those are a few of the observations of my delegation on the issues before us. While complimenting the Chairman, for the manner in which he has been guiding the deliberations of the First Committee at the forty-seventh session, my delegation looks forward to the important consultations that are to take place in the next few days.

Mr. MARSCHIK (Austria): Austria is among the countries that have submitted written comments on the Secretary-General's report; they are contained in document A/47/887. My statement will therefore be extremely brief.

We share the Secretary-General's opinion that, at a time when international relations are marked by a new atmosphere of détente and

(Mr. Marschik, Austria)

cooperation, new opportunities have also arisen for multilateral disarmament efforts.

To meet this new challenge, the international community requires a functioning and efficient multilateral arms regulation and disarmament machinery. The division of responsibilities between the complementary elements of this machinery will have to be carefully balanced.

The First Committee has been and should continue to be the main multilateral forum for the consideration of all disarmament and arms control issues. It has been able to streamline its agenda, to concentrate its work, to reduce duplication and to facilitate consensus resolutions. A constructive spirit of cooperation during the recent sessions will further enhance the work of the First Committee.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission, after having implemented its reform programme, further strives to improve its efficiency while at the same time providing all interested States with the opportunity to participate in and to contribute to its work. A continued concentration on a few well-defined topics will surely facilitate concrete results.

The Conference on Disarmament has served effectively as a multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. We have all been impressed by and applauded its success in concluding the chemical-weapons Convention. Now the Conference is reassessing its agenda as well as its composition. Austria strongly believes that at this point the Conference on Disarmament would benefit greatly from the addition of a number of countries that are willing and able to make substantial contributions. We share the notion that an early enlargement would more adequately reflect the level of interest in its work in the international community as a whole.

(Mr. Marschik, Austria)

Austria has repeatedly expressed its interest in becoming a member of the Conference on Disarmament. It submitted its application for membership as early as 1982. Ever since non-members were given the possibility to participate in the work of the Conference, Austria has been granted the status of participating non-member and has over the years actively participated in the work of the Conference. We sincerely hope, as do a number of other countries, that the time has now come to be given full membership in the Conference on Disarmament.

The Security Council has in the recent past reconfirmed and strengthened its role as the central organ for the maintenance and restoration of international peace and security. We welcome an active involvement by the Security Council also in the areas of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. In this respect, as to verification, we recall the important role in the nuclear field of the International Atomic Energy Agency under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and safeguards agreements, and in the field of chemical weapons of the future Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which we are confident will be fully operational within the next two years.

Mr. VASILYEV (Belarus) (interpretation from Russian): There has been obvious progress on arms control and disarmament in recent years. The rapid changes in the world after the end of the cold war are opening favourable possibilities in disarmament and the safeguarding of international security. At the same time, they are creating new problems which call for innovative solutions. For that reason, the delegation of Belarus was pleased with the Secretary-General's initiative in presenting his report "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" (A/C.1/47/7). The report's concept of integration, globalization and revitalization in the area of arms control and disarmament and its other important proposals have received broad support. We agree in particular with the idea that disarmament plays a central role in safeguarding international peace and security and that all countries must participate in the disarmament process.

Belarus will make a concrete contribution to the solution of disarmament problems. We shall act responsibly in fulfilling our obligations under international agreements.

During the First Committee's general debate last October our delegation presented details of the measures we have taken with regard to disarmament and international security, as well as our efforts to reach a non-nuclear, neutral status. We are pleased to report that Belarus has recently taken important new steps in this regard. On 4 February 1993 Supreme Soveit of the Republic of Belarus ratified the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, dated 31 July 1991, as well as the Protocol to it signed at Lisbon on 25 May 1992. We also decided that the Republic of Belarus

(Mr. Vasilyev, Belarus)

should become a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear State. Of all the successor States of the former Soviet Union with respect to that Treaty, only Belarus has indicated its readiness to carry out its obligations under the Lisbon Protocol in full and without reservations or conditions. Thus for the first time in the history of the international community, a sovereign State has voluntarily renounced the possibility of the actual possession of nuclear weapons.

The Republic of Belarus believes that its position on nuclear disarmament will be properly appreciated by the international community and feels that it has good reason to count on comprehensive financial assistance in carrying out all the measures associated with the practical implementation of the obligations it assumed under those agreements, as well as in converting its armaments industry and modernizing its technologies.

The delegation of Belarus welcomed the decision that the First Committee should proceed to an exchange of views and prepare concrete, concerted recommendations on enhancing the effectiveness of multilateral disarmament machinery. Of course, the international community must make maximum use of the means at its disposaland adopt measures to reform the existing machinery and improve coordination between the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament. Interesting proposals on these matters have been made in the replies (A/47/887 and addenda) submitted by States in response to the Secretary-General's invitation.*

We all know how important is the role of the First Committee in the consideration of disarmament and security matters. Accordingly, we can only welcome the desire on the part of delegations to enhance the effectiveness of

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* The Chairman returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Vasilyev, Belarus)

the Committee's work. That is precisely the purpose of measures such as the joint consideration of disarmament and security questions, the reduction in the number of draft resolutions, the merging of related questions and the adoption of a growing number of resolutions by consensus. At the same time, like other delegations, we believe that additional efforts must be made to revitalize the First Committee's work.

The delegation of Belarus values the work of the Disarmament Commission and therefore supports the proposal further rationalizing the Commission's activities; we favour establishing closer links with the Conference on Disarmament and the adoption of a three-item agenda providing for stage-by-stage consideration of the questions to be dealt with.

Concrete proposals to enhance the effectiveness of the Conference on Disarmament have been examined in the Conference itself. We wish only to point out the need to correct its priorities, make forms and methods of work more flexible and enlarge its composition. Our delegation takes this opportunity to confirm that Belarus has applied for membership in the Conference on Disarmament.

In conclusion, the delegation of Belarus would like to stress the increasing role of the Office of Disarmament Affairs and the need to strengthen it and revitalize its activities.

The delegation of the Republic of Belarus wishes to express its readiness to cooperate with you, Mr. Chairman, and with all delegations in preparing, and in reaching agreement on, concrete recommendations on the matters we are considering, which would, in our view, enable the international community to respond with more flexibility in the new challenges and priorities of today.

Mr. MORADI (Islamic Republic of Iran): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to express my delegation's satisfaction over the way in which you and the other members of the Bureau have conducted the proceedings of the First Committee during this forty-seventh session, and especially your efforts in convening the resumed session of the Committee.

In reviewing the disarmament machinery in the post-cold-war era, we should be guided by the following three basic principles.

First, we should build on our past achievements, especially the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament.

Secondly, we should bear in mind that what prevented the international community from making substantial progress on disarmament and related security issues in the cold war era was more a lack of political will to negotiate than of the disarmament machinery itself.

Thirdly, we should be aware that in a more diversified and less centralized world any risk of excessive centralization in dealing with matters of reform must be avoided.

The three multilateral disarmament and arms-control bodies have distinct and interrelated functions, which have been carefully crafted. The central issue in the reform process should be how best we can rationalize the work of these bodies to ensure that, both individually and collectively, they contribute as effectively as possible to the process of cooperative security.

(Mr. Moradi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

Having said that, my delegation expresses its reservations about the notion of greater Security Council involvement in disarmament matters and, in particular, the enforcement of non-proliferation as suggested in paragraph 44 of the report of the Secretary-General incorporated in document A/C.1/47/7. The democratization of the Security Council must be given priority before any expansion of its agenda is considered, for the work of the Security Council does not reflect an awareness that the Council is acting on behalf of Member States, as stated for in Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations. It is true that recourse to the Security Council has already been envisaged in Article 6 of the biological and toxin weapons Convention and Article 12 of the chemical weapons Convention, but this means must be handled with great care to avoid possible misuse. Therefore, we believe that the involvement of the Security Council in disarmament matters should not at the present time go beyond the provisions of Articles 26 and 47 of the United Nations Charter. The General Assembly, as stipulated in the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, should remain the main organ of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

The First Committee's working methods have improved in recent years. In this regard, fewer resolutions with more consensus and merging of topics in the debate on disarmament and security issues are noticeable. But much remains to be done to streamline the work of this Committee and make it more goal-oriented. This could be achieved by reducing the length of the general debate, focusing the debate on selected items or clusters, reducing further the number of items and resolutions through the merging of similar items and resolutions and the bi- or tri-annualization of items, and terminating the consideration of obsolete items.

(Mr. Moradi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

The United Nations Disarmament Commission has made some progress since it was reorganized by the reform programme adopted in 1990. The work of the Commission should aim at a three-item phased agenda for the future. When including new items on the agenda, priority should be given to relevant subjects that do not overlap with those of the First Committee and the Conference on Disarmament. In order for the Commission to ensure in-depth dialogue on complex issues where rather fundamental differences of view exist, focused working papers must be circulated in advance of the session so that delegations may come prepared. The work of the Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee should be viewed in conjunction and be mutually complementary.

The Conference on Disarmament should become the sole real negotiating body of the international community on disarmament issues, not a forum for prepared policy statements and debate on the mandates of the various ad hoc committees. The Conference should not become open-ended or a forum with a large membership, for the disadvantages of this far outweigh any advantages. Past experience has shown the problems of a negotiating body with a large membership, especially when it works by consensus. There are other risks as well. The delegation of Finland, in the special meeting of this Committee on 11 November 1992, expressed the view that:

> "With a new, open Conference on Disarmament in operation, the role of, and indeed the need for, the United Nations Disarmament Commission should be reviewed. There might not be a need for a separate deliberative organ once the open Conference on Disarmament is in play." (A/C.1/47/PV.29, pp. 24-25)

(Mr. Moradi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

We look forward to seeing an informal background paper on the composition of the Conference on Disarmament promised by its then President on 8 December 1992.

With regard to the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament in the post-cold-war era, we are of the view that it should focus on priorities in disarmament negotiations as set out in paragraph 45 of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament. The end of the cold war and the fall of the Soviet Union have not diminished the danger of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In this regard, we express our reservations about the notion of having the Conference on Disarmament take on the role of a permanent review and supervisory body for some existing multilateral arms-control and disarmament agreements, as was mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General. One of the problems with this notion is that the membership of the Conference is not identical to the parties to any given agreement.

The Office of Disarmament Affairs was downgraded last year from a Department to an Office, despite the fact that its workload in the light of the conclusion of several agreements, including the Register of armaments and exchange of information in the framework of the biological and toxin weapons Convention, had increased. We hope that this Office will be adequately financed and staffed so as to be able to cope with new challenges.

And finally, there are some ideas of moving the Office of Disarmament Affairs to Geneva. We have no disagreement with this as long as it does not affect the interactions between delegations based in New York and the Office.

Mr. NORBERG (Sweden): Sweden appreciates the report of the Secretary-General on "New dimensions in arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era". The report and the reconvened meetings of the First Committee this week provide us with an excellent opportunity to assess the implications of the end of the cold war for multilateral disarmament, arms regulations and non-proliferation efforts. Fundamental change has occurred in the field of international security. To meet present and future demands, the multilateral agenda and machinery must develop accordingly.

Integration is a key concept. Less now than ever can security be seen in a restricted military perspective. Economic, ethnic, social, humanitarian, ecological and other sources of instability and conflict are increasingly recgonized as threats to international peace and security.

The United Nations system is particularly well suited to integrating measures of disarmament and arms control, non-proliferation and confidence-building into the broader structure of international peace and security. It is rapidly becoming accepted that such measures can be essential tools for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping, peace enforcement and post-conflict peace-building. More thought should be given to how this can be concretely achieved. Regional disarmament can reinforce global arrangements and strengthen political settlements in conflict areas. The United Nations and the Conference on Disarmament have important roles to play in facilitating regional disarmament.

Given the limited time available this week, I concur with the view that we should now concentrate on the arms control and disarmament machinery. The First Committee remains central as a normative body in the field of international security, arms regulation and disarmament. The agenda of the Committee should be revised to encompass all items on international security,

(Mr. Norberg, Sweden)

arms regulation and disarmament - but no other issues. It is also important to streamline its agenda in order to make the work of the Committee more systematic and efficient. To that end, the agenda should be organized in subject-related clusters. This would also make it easier to grasp the work of the Committee and to channel the results in an appropriate and effective way.

(Mr. Norberg, Sweden)

The Conference on Disarmament should remain the single global multilateral negotiating body. Its present composition, however, reflects a bipolar world system that no longer exists. The expansion of the membership of the Conference is long overdue, preferably to include all States which apply. It is becoming increasingly difficult to defend the exclusion of a large number of candidates, many of which have amply demonstrated their interest and their competence to contribute to what should be a truly global effort.

The Conference should take the decision on its expansion during its next session, in May and June. It is a most urgent question and may be a key to important decisions on the disarmament machinery as a whole.

The fundamental task of the Conference should also be, in the future, to negotiate global disarmament treaties. It could, however, in the new international context, also serve to elaborate politically binding commitments, both globally amd regionally. Only an expanded and more open Conference can adequately reflect the new situation and meet its needs.

In conclusion, the time has come to reform the international disarmament machinery. Our task this week is to reach concrete, agreed recommendations setting reform in motion.

Mr. SHOUKRY (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): The delegation of Egypt is glad of the opportunity, through the resumed session of the First Committee, in accordance with General Assembly decision 47/422, to undertake this important round of dialogue and consultation among different delegations in order to reassess and review the disarmament machinery of the United

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

Nations and take up the ideas put forward by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.1/47/7) "New dimensions of arms regulations and disarmament in the post-cold-war era".

The changes in international relations in the recent past have had very important repercussions for the present and future of the international community. Despite the disappearance of military confrontation between the two super-Powers following these political changes, the international community continues to face a major challenge to international peace and security and to the stability of all peoples of the world, especially in the light of the emergence of new hot spots of conflagration in many parts of the world. Egypt supports the ideas contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the need to integrate the issues of disarmament and international peace and security as two sides of the same coin. We believe there is a need to continue attempting to eradicate those threats to international peace and security as a result of the continuing stockpiling of weapons of all kinds. Hence, on the basis of our membership in the United Nations - an Organization on which we pin our deepest hopes for the future - we believe that we must all spare no effort in our search for the best possible means to ensure that the disarmament machinery of the United Nations will be adapted to current international variables; and we must all put forward ideas to ensure that this machinery will continue to strengthen disarmament measures in order to preserve international peace and security and, finally, achieve complete disarmament.

With regard to the United Nations machinery in the field of disarmament, we should like at the outset to express our firm dedication to the principles and bases upon which this machinery must be founded when dealing with the

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

issues of disarmament which are contained in the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978.

The interrelationship between the achievement of progress on the basis of these principles and the strengthening of international peace and security has been agreed by the vast majority of the international community. Hence, Egypt attaches special importance to international efforts aimed at eliminating the dangers presented by weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. Egypt has sincerely welcomed efforts to achieve progress in this field, particularly in multilateral forums and United Nations bodies, because we believe that this is the best guarantee that all members of the international community will remain committed to any agreement that is reached. We also welcome bilateral achievements in this field; and we continue to hope that more steps will be taken to eradicate the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction in general.

At the same time, we cannot ignore the need for the United Nations to face up to all manifestations of instability and military confrontation in the world by shouldering its responsibility in the field of disarmament in all its aspects. We therefore acknowledge the importance of taking up regional disarmament as one of the elements for strengthening international security. We also stress the need for regional negotiations and initiatives on disarmament to take fully into account those priorities agreed to in the Final Document of the special session.

On the basis of this conviction, Egypt has put forward two initiatives: the first, making the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone; and the second, making the Middle East a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction. We are fully convinced that United Nations machinery can contribute towards translating those two initiatives into reality, provided the interested

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

parties show the necessary political will. We believe that the Security Council has a major role in this area because it is the main political organ concerned with maintaining international peace and security and determining approaches to the regulation of armaments. On the other hand, Egypt has expressed its continuing readiness to consider all arms-control initiatives at the regional level, as long as any such initiative places equal obligations on all the States of a given region, while taking into consideration the political and security conditions in that region when finalizing the terms of the initiative.

The United Nations disarmament machinery has always had a high degree of complementarity. In putting forward ideas to review this machinery, we must therefore be very careful to avoid creating an imbalance in that complementarity. Furthermore, we must not ignore the many achievements that United Nations bodies have been able to attain despite the many problems that faced the Organization during the cold war.

Egypt supports the current trend in the First Committee towards rationalizing its work by integrating similar draft resolutions. We should also like to see a larger proportion of resolutions adopted without a vote, which would highlight the Committee's ability, reflected in its membership, to maintain the current inclination to reach compromise solutions that take into account the interests of all, instead of escalating confrontation out of individual interests. On the other hand, we believe there is a positive trend in the First Committee towards elaborating practical measures in the field of disarmament, such as maintaining a Register of Conventional Arms. Egypt supports the discussion of ideas on having the First Committee revert to

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

dealing with issues of international peace and security currently inscribed either directly on the agenda of the General Assembly or being considered by other Main Committees.

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

The close link between the issues of international peace and security and disarmament requires that they be dealt with in complementary fashion within the Committee.

As for the Conference on Disarmament, we believe it has a very distinctive and prominent position among United Nations mechanisms because it is the only negotiating forum on disarmament in the United Nations. The deliberative, negotiating mission of the Conference demands that it continue to remain independent of other United Nations mechanisms. The Conference was created under international circumstances which are totally different from those in which we are living today, the membership of the Conference must therefore be revised, in order to reflect current reality. There are many ideas on the subject, ranging from limited expansion of the membership of the Conference to accepting as members all those States wishing to participate in its deliberations. We must reach a compromise on the proposals if we are to support and revitalize that forum.

Moreover, to ensure that the Conference is imbued with genuine political will, all decisions concerning its future must be the product of consultations among the full membership and in keeping with the applicable rules of procedure. The Conference must also maintain its negotiating character, and we object to all attempts to weaken that role. At the same time, we would warn of the danger posed by the attempt on the part of certain delegations to twist the Conference's rules of procedure to their narrow, selfish purposes which are at odds with the current thinking of most members of the international community. Such a method, we believe, is an utter violation of the principles of democracy and equality among members of the international community and a return to an era that we hoped had ended.

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

The delegation of Egypt is joined by many of the members of the Conference on Disarmament in its concern over the fact that the Conference has not achieved the desired progress in the field of nuclear disarmament. We hope the Conference will quickly be able to overcome these obstacles, which will reaffirm its credibility and its readiness to take up its responsibility to face the threat posed by armaments in all its aspects, and not selectively.

As to the Disarmament Commission, most delegations have paid tribute to the reform plan it adopted in 1990, and many have commented on the plan's effectiveness. Indeed, in 1992 the Commission was able to conclude its consideration of the item on objective information on military matters. Now that we have reached the end of the first trial period and have satisfied ourselves that the Commission is able to keep pace with international developments, Egypt believes that it should continue its activities as the major deliberative body of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

By the same token, the Office of Disarmament Affairs has an indispensable complementary role in support of the three United Nations disarmament mechanisms and their Member States. Given the widening scope of the activities of the United Nations disarmament machinery, the Office of Disarmament Affairs should be supported so that it can continue to perform its work with the effectiveness we all expect, not only in providing services to the three mechanisms but also in participating in substantive efforts towards disarmament.

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

Better coordination among the three mechanisms is needed, particularly in the light of current international changes and in order to achieve decisive results in the field of disarmament. At the same time, we must stress the need for the three mechanisms to remain independent.

We hope this resumed session will provide an opportunity to exchange opinions on these important subjects, and that the spirit of cooperation which has now become customary among members of this Committee will allow us to take important decisions on the United Nations bodies working in the field of disarmament. The delegation of Egypt looks forward to effective participation in this resumed session.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Arabic): May I point out that the representative of Egypt went well beyond the 10 minutes that we had agreed to.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.